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MAR 10 1905

Dr. Brown.

Pyong Yang, Korea.  
Jan. 24th. 1905.

S. A. Moffell

Rev. A. J. Brown D.D.  
156 Fifth Ave.  
New York.

Dear Dr. Brown,

Doubtless it will seem that I have been negligent in the matter of my letter on the subject of the Korean Independent Church, as per action of the Mission recorded on page 48 of printed minutes, but the very great delay in the printing of the Minutes of the Council for which I have been waiting is the main reason for my delay. I think however that this will be in time to receive whatever attention is necessary before the next meeting of the General Assembly.

There is little occasion for me to write much in addition to the action of the Council, a copy of which will accompany this as part of my letter. The letter from the Board, received in response to last year's report, and request, was one which caused us a great deal of thought and received most serious consideration up to and including the time of the Council meeting. The Committee on Church Government also gave itself to prolonged consideration of the matter in every phase that we could think of and in all its bearings upon the conditions of the work in Korea. When our report was brought before the Council, copies were placed in the hands of the members that the report might be clearly understood. The report very evidently expressed the views of the Council and was approved without a single negative vote after the asking of questions and hearing of replies which brought out fully the import of the report and its bearings upon what we all recognize to be a step of the greatest importance. There was but one member of the Council, Mr. Harrison of the So. Presbyterian Mission, who expressed any doubt as to the advisability of the plan proposed, but after hearing explanations he said that he had no alternative plan which he could propose and that he did not know that any better plan could be devised. We all recognized that under any plan there doubtless will be difficulties to meet and overcome, but the Council was strongly of the conviction that this plan for Korea presents less difficulties and offers greater advantages than any known to us as having been adopted in other fields.

The So. Presbyterian members of Council stated their belief that the objection in their Church arose from a feeling that the procedure is one not directly provided for in the rules of their Church although they know that many of their ablest men think it a wise procedure. They also stated their hope that even though they might not be able to unite with us, we, the other three Presbyterian Missions, might unite to form the Union Presbytery of which their native churches should be a part and by which their candidates for the ministry might be ordained.

Personally I know that Dr. Rankin their Secretary who died here in Pyong Yang was heartily in favor of the plan after his conversation with their missionaries in China and with us in Korea and that it was his intention to urge upon his Church to give its

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sanction to the same.

I would ask that in connection with paragraphs III and (3) of the report you particularly notice the report of the Committee on Theological Education, (appended herewith), and I would ask a very careful reading of the whole report in the hope that it may clear up any misunderstandings, misapprehensions or doubts in the minds of the Board. On the other hand we will most sincerely welcome any further light or suggestions from the Board which may enable us to see some better plan of procedure which will meet the needs of the situation in Korea. We are the ones dealing directly with existing conditions and upon us must rest the burden and responsibility for the successful execution of any plan adopted, and we desire most earnestly to secure the plan which will most speedily and with the least difficulty place the Korean Church in a position of independent responsibility, able to wisely govern itself and manage its own affairs. Believing that our proposed plan promises this desired result we again most earnestly request the sanction of the Board and the General Assembly that we may not long delay the Presbyterian organization of this large body of Christians, which will number over 10,000 communicants before another year's report is made. (see statistics appended)

We deem this a matter of gravest importance to the welfare of the Church in Korea and believe that to delay much longer in giving the Koreans the organization to which they are entitled will be to bring upon us many difficulties in the management of a work already so large that it more than taxes our strength and resources. In less than three years we shall have men ready for ordination and by that time we must be provided with regular Presbyterian authority for their ordination. How shall this be effected? Our plan differs but slightly from that of the English Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed Missions in South China which has been one of the most successful plans inaugurated. To us upon whom the question presses with greater force each year, it is of great importance that we have a settled plan of procedure upon which we can go ahead with the natural development of the Church. This plan should be adopted before our men are ready for ordination in order that that step may receive the attention which its importance deserves.

That the Board may see its way clear towards granting our urgent request is our hope.

Very sincerely,

Samuel R. Wolfe  
Sec. R. M.

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